

IN HONOR OF THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE U.S.A.

### HON. JOSEPH M. HOFFEL

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. This valuable organization has been empowering young women to develop leadership skills, along with a sense of determination, self-reliance and teamwork since 1912.

Today, the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. have over 3.8 million members throughout the United States. In my district alone, 10,000 Girls Scouts are able to acquire the self-confidence and expertise that is needed to distinguish themselves as leaders in their communities.

I commend the Girl Scouts of Southeastern Pennsylvania and the Girl Scouts of Freedom Valley for their outstanding accomplishments in the areas of leadership, community service and personal development. Both of these chapters offer young women in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania the opportunity to develop life skills that will enable them to become confident and caring adults.

For 90 years, the Girls Scouts of the U.S.A. have had a positive impact on the lives of countless young women nationwide. It is my hope that the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. continue these strong traditions for the next 90 years and beyond.

### THE MENTAL HEALTH EQUITABLE TREATMENT ACT

### HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today celebrating introduction of the Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act with my good friend from New Jersey, Mrs. ROUKEMA. Too many Americans have been waiting too long for equal access to the health care they need. I hope by introducing this compromise mental health parity bill we can make it happen this year.

I could give you statistics about the prevalence of mental illnesses and cost of insurance discrimination, but the bottom line is that parity is about people's lives. Tracy Mixson of Asheville, North Carolina watched the downward spiral of her friend, Jeff. He exhausted his health insurance and ran out of medication. He tried to see another doctor, but couldn't afford the costs and had to stop going. In her words, "I watched him suffer for a little while, and then it was over. He ended his life."

This issue is not complicated. Our bill is a civil rights bill. It recognizes that prejudice distorts the markets and requires intervention. It reflects the best values on which this country was built, principles of inclusion and opportunity for all Americans.

Discrimination in any form is a stain on the equality that makes this nation great. And make no mistake, discrimination is at the heart

of this issue. The question for Congress to decide is whether we continue to indulge our old, deep-seated prejudices against the mentally ill or whether policy catches up with science.

We will hear that parity is too expensive. I am confident that nobody in this Congress would countenance rationing health care for cancer or asthma. Like mental illnesses, these are potentially fatal, frequently treatable, chronic diseases. Unlike cancer and asthma patients, however, most Americans suffering from mental illnesses find that their health plans hinder access to necessary medical treatment.

If we would not tell asthma or cancer patients that their coverage is too expensive, why would we say that to the mentally ill? Essentially, we are asking our constituents with mental illness to sacrifice potentially life-saving treatment in order to keep health care costs down for everybody else. The unfairness of that request is manifest.

We don't ask cancer patients to bear that burden. We don't ask any other patients to bear that burden. And that's why this debate is not about cost. It's about prejudice.

We will hear that if we pass parity, mental health care will be abused. This argument is a red herring. It is an invocation of the stereotypes that good people rely on to justify looking the other way in the face of injustice. We should not fall for it.

We have a strong science base and the authority of the Surgeon General, NIH, AMA, and Nobel Laureates saying mental illnesses are diseases on par with physical ailments. We have experience in dozens of states and the federal employees' health program showing that parity results in a more efficient use of mental health resources.

So I ask you, as you consider the merits of this bill, don't let the issue get muddled. I believe the choice is simple. On the one hand is the status quo. It's the denial of medically necessary care because of stereotypes and prejudice. It's suicide and lost jobs and broken lives. It's stories like that of Molly Close from Louisville, Kentucky, who wrote:

In 1998 I was hospitalized 3 times for depression with suicidal intent. Each hospitalization was terminated, not because my doctor felt I was ready to leave, but because my insurance company refused to pay for further treatment. When I left the hospital the last time, I was still severely depressed. I was not healthy enough to return to my teaching career of 24 years. Since I had exhausted all my leave days, I was forced to resign my job. . . .

It is time to end the discrimination that the Molly Closes of this country face.

Our earlier parity bill, H.R. 162, has 203 co-sponsors. We have heard the concerns of employers about cost and the need for flexibility and that's why we are here today introducing this compromise bill. This new legislation makes a major concession in dropping substance abuse. It contains explicit guarantees that plans can manage benefits. It protects the rights of health plans to set medical necessity criteria. A majority of the House supported these parity provisions last year during the appropriations process and I'm hopeful that we will have a chance to see whether a majority will support it on the Floor this year.

Let's give the 54 million Americans with mental disorders full access to the American Dream. This bill is the right thing for them and the right thing for our nation. I look forward to

working with my friends on both sides of the aisle to give all Americans the health care they need and deserve.

### HONORING JERRY LEE BRYANT, COMMUNITY LEADER AND FRIEND

### HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the City of Rome, Georgia, as well as the entire north-west Georgia community, lost a great friend, a member of the Rome City Commission, and a champion to many who grew up spending much of their time at the Rome YMCA. On March 5, 2002, Jerry Lee Bryant, as described by the Director of the local YMCA, was a "Living Legend," passed away.

A native of Corbin, Kentucky, Jerry graduated from the University of Louisville after serving with the U. S. Air Force during the Korean War. He began his career with the YMCA in Waycross, Georgia, in 1953. In 1960, he was one of 32 "Y" directors from across the United States chosen to serve as a leader for the YMCA World Youth Conference in Holland.

Jerry had a passion for the YMCA, his church, his community, the City of Rome, and its schools and young people. Many men who grew up in the Y thought of him as a substitute father.

Jerry and his lovely wife Martha came to Rome in 1962. Jerry became Director of the Rome YMCA and Martha served as the Y's program director. He remained with the local Y for 30 years, and during that time he led the YMCA board in a building project that doubled the size of the Y facility. He was instrumental in leading the YMCA in its purchase of Camp Glen Hollow in 1989. Grown men now remember Jerry as their "daddy"; a hero; one who made an impression on their lives; a second father. Following his retirement in 1991, Jerry spent the majority of his time serving his community and assisting his wife, Martha, in her business, Bryant & Garrett Travel Agency. He was the first chairman of the Heart of the Community Board of Governors, a Seventh District STAR Student chairman, and he served on the board of the Floyd Medical Center Health Care Foundation. Jerry also was a past president of the Rome Rotary Club, and served as chairman of the Administrative Board and Board of Trustees of Rome First United Methodist Church.

Jerry's wife, Martha, his children, Chuck Bryant and Lee Ann Bryant Edwards, as well as two grandchildren, have lost a wonderful husband, a tremendous father, and a grandfather, who loved them dearly. The citizens of Rome and Floyd County have lost a great leader. I have lost a good friend.

### DELAY IMPLEMENTATION OF FARM SECURITY ACT UNTIL NEXT YEAR

### HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I understand that yesterday the lead negotiators for the